TOWYN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of the Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1949.

GENTLEMEN,

I am submitting for your consideration my Annual Report on the health and sanitary conditions of the Towyn Urban Area for the Year ended 31st December, 1949.

During the year, the area has remained remarkably free from epidemics.

Housing.—A few of the condemned houses in the Area afford shelter for families.

Section A. Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres): 22,959.

Population: 3,809.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1949) according to Rate Books: 1150.

Rateable value: £18,442.

Sum represented by a 1d. Rate: £72/2/9.

The Area is chiefly agricultural, and there is no industry liable to affect the public health. There is a quarry in the Urban Area affording employment for workmen. The unemployed workmen were fully occupied during the year at various camps situated in the area.

The Urban Area includes Towyn, Aberdovey, and the villages of Bryncrug, Rhydyronen and Cwrt, near Pennal.

There was a fair influx of visitors during the year to this area: hotels, boarding-houses and farms were not crowded during the season.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1949:—

Live Births	Legitimate: males, 26; females, 31; total 57 Illegitimate: males, 2; females, 1; total 3	60
Still Births	Legitimate: male, 1; female, 1; total 2 Illegitimate: male, 0; female, 0; total 0	2

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population : 15·7
Death Rate per 1,000 „ „ : 13·6
Deaths : males, 21 ; females, 30 ; total 51
Maternal deaths from puerperal causes (No. 30) : 0
Maternal mortality per 1,000 (Live and Still births) : 0
Deaths of infants under one year of age : 2
Deaths from Cancer : males, 1 ; females, 7 : total 8
Cancer death rate per 1,000 of the population : 2·1
Deaths from Measles : 0
„ „ Whooping Cough : 0
„ „ Diarrhœa : 0
„ „ Nephritis : 3
„ „ Cerebral Hæmorrhage and Thrombosis : 8
„ „ Influenza : 1

COMPARISON OF VITAL STATISTICS FOR SIX YEARS PER 1,000.

		1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.	1948.	1949.
Birth Rate	...	19·63	13·64	17·45	14·4	15·0	15·7
Death Rate	...	16·23	15·82	17·73	14·1	11·4	13·6

Section B. General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

Public Health Officers.—One Medical Officer (part time) ; one Sanitary Inspector (part time), who also acts as Surveyor to the Council.

Nursing.—One District Nurse at Towyn and one at Aberdovey. They attend maternity, surgical and medical cases. They also act as Health Visitors under the supervision of the County Medical Officer of Health.

Laboratory Facilities.—Pathological specimens were sent to the Clinical Laboratory, Aberystwyth, and also throat swabs. Diphtheria Antitoxin is kept in stock and supplied to the local practitioners when required.

Hospitals.—Isolation Hospitals : Nil.
Small Pox Hospitals : Nil.
County Isolation Hospital : Nil.

Maternity Services.—Maternity Wing of the Towyn and District Cottage Hospital, opened in 1933, consisting of six maternity beds, delivery ward with modern equipment, is of inestimable value to the district. Number of cases admitted during the year, 76.

Hospitals for children and orthopædics. Nil.

Orthopædic Clinics are held periodically in the county, and suitable cases can be admitted to Gobowen, Oswestry, through the County Orthopædic Committee.

A War Memorial Cottage Hospital at Towyn supplies the needs of

the area, consisting of 20 beds and 2 children's cots for the surgical, medical and maternity cases. Fully trained Staff and a portable X-Ray equipment. Now serves as an E.M.S. Hospital.

Ambulance.—A Motor Ambulance, maintained and provided by the Merioneth County Council, garaged at O. B. Sea School, Aberdovey, is available for conveying non-infectious cases to and from the Hospital. It is also available to the public during emergencies.

Clinics.—A Maternity and Child Welfare Centre is maintained by a grant from the Merioneth County Council. This Centre is supervised by the local practitioners in rotation. The attendance of infants is very good. The Clinic is held fortnightly. The District Nurses attend and voluntary helpers provide tea, etc. A limited amount of Virol and milk is available for backward infants.

School Clinics for treatment of eyes, tonsils and adenoids are held periodically at the local Hospital, provided by the County Council.

Midwives.—Midwifery is undertaken by the two District Nurses who are qualified for this work—one at Towyn and the other at Aberdovey.

Section C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water Supply.—Towyn: The Towyn Water Supply Chlorination plant gives satisfaction. There was no shortage during the year.

Aberdovey. The Aberdovey Water Supply Chlorination plant gives satisfaction. There was no shortage during the year.

Bryncrug Village: Supplied from the Towyn mains. There are a few farms and houses in the vicinity of Bryncrug without an adequate water supply. The occupiers have to draw water from the adjoining brook which is contaminated by sewage from several farms. I have repeatedly urged the Council to remedy this defect and to connect them to the Towyn mains, which are within easy reach. This is very urgent.

Cwrt Village, near Pennal: Public water supply is good.

Drainage and Sewerage.—Towyn: water carriage to the sea. A few houses are still unconnected with the main sewer.

Aberdovey: water carriage to the Dovey estuary. Most houses are connected with the main sewer. The sewer outlet is now working satisfactorily.

Bryncrug Village: Refuse and closet pails are conveyed to a field adjoining the village. A sewerage scheme is under construction.

Cwrt Village, near Pennal: Refuse and closet pails are collected once a week and deposited on land at a suitable distance from the village.

Rivers and Streams.—Bryncrug brook is contaminated by sewage from several farms, which is unavoidable. Owing to the danger, the adjacent farms should be connected with the Towyn main supply, viz. Ysguborwen, Brynithel and Penybont.

Closet Accommodation.—Bryncrug and Cwrt Villages : Pail closets.

Number of water closets in the area	...	976
Number of pail closets ,,	...	162
New water closets ,,	...	0

Shops.—No action was taken during the year under the provisions of the Shops Act, 1934.

Swimming Baths and Pools.—There are none in the Area.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.—Nil.

Special Classes of Premises.—There are no common lodging-houses for casuals in the area. No permanent tents or vans and underground sleeping rooms.

Rag Flock Acts, 1911 and 1920.—There are no premises in the area.

Schools.—Sanitation is good. Towyn and Aberdovey Schools are supplied with good water from the respective mains.

Pennal School : Supplied with good water by the Pennal Parish Council.

Bryncrug School : Modern buildings. Water is supplied from the Towyn mains.

Section D. Housing.

1.—Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year :

(1) (A) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	95
(B) Number of Inspections made for the purpose	115
(2) (A) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	0
(B) Number of Inspections made for the purpose	0
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	2
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	6

2.—Remedy of Defects during the year without service of Formal Notices :

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ...	8

3.—Action under Statutory Powers during the year :

(A) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10, and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :	
(i) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring repairs	4
(ii) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—	
(*a*) By owners	4
(*b*) By Local Authority in default of owners	0

(B) Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—

(i) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 6

(ii) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice :—

(*a*) By owners 5

(*b*) By Local Authority in default of owners 0

(C) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

(i) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made 1

(ii) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders 0

(D) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

(i) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit 0

4.—Housing Act, 1936, Part IV.,—Overcrowding :

(A) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year ... 4
(ii) Number of families dwelling therein... 8
(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein 32

(B) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ... 0

(C) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ... 0
(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases 6

(D) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding 0

Total number of formal notices issued 0

Total number of informal notices issued 6

Number complied with 5

Total number of New Houses completed :—

(*a*) By Local Sanitary Authority 0
(*b*) By private enterprise 0

Number of plans—new houses, 5 ; alteration to dwelling houses, 12 ; other buildings, 30 47

Visits to Bakehouses and Food Premises 13
Number of notices re defects 0

Number of visits to Ice Cream premises 19
Visits to Cowsheds 18
Number of notices re defects 1

Visits to Dairies 16
Number of notices re defects 2
Visits to Slaughter-house 96
Number of notices re defects 0
Notices re removal of ashes 0

Notices re removal of manure 0

Notices re defective drains	5
Number of visits in cases of Infectious Diseases	12
Number of houses disinfected	4
Factories Act, 1937. Number of Factories and Workshops on Ledger	45
Inspections under Factories Act	10

Section E. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Milk Supply.—I again repeat the importance that milk vendors should pay more attention to general cleanliness with regard to cowsheds and dairies. Several cowsheds in the area are not suitable and are overcrowded. The floors are not uniformly cemented for cleansing purposes. Ventilation and light are defective. Milk cows are not groomed, and the teats and udders are not cleansed. Cows are not examined for Tuberculosis—a very important factor if we are to prevent the infection of children with this disease. I emphasise the importance of milk vendors producing accredited milk. There are two vendors in the area supplying T.T. milk. No samples of milk have been sent for analysis by the Local Sanitary Authority. The County Council have undertaken this work for the Ministry of Health. Frequent samples of milk are sent by the Local Authority for analysis, to be tested for cleanliness and keeping quality. These reports are very confusing, as samples from various farms vary from Categories A to C month by month. I strongly recommend consumers to boil the milk until a uniform standard of cleanliness is obtained.

Food and Drugs Act.—The Chief Constable for the County undertakes this work.

	Cattle	*Calves*	*Sheep*	*Pigs*
Number of animals slaughtered during 1949 ...	196	51	2415	60
Number of animals examined during 1949 ...	196	51	2415	60

Meat condemned as being unfit for human consumption :—

Carcases and Part Carcases.	Tuberculosis.		Other Causes.			
	Cattle	Pigs	Cattle	Calves	Sheep	Pigs
	2	Nil	12	2	6	3

Offal—due to Tuberculosis, approximately 506 lbs.

Offal—due to Other Causes 2092 lbs.

Other Food Condemned—

27	Tins Meat.	26 lbs. Fish.	
65	„ Milk.	25 lbs. Poultry.	
141	„ Vegetables and Fruit.	349 lbs. Meat & Offal (Frozen).	
20	„ Soup.	114 lbs. Sausages.	

Water Supply—Number of visits to Reservoir and Waterworks, 44.

Number of water samples taken: Chemical, 1; Bacteriological, 49.

	Satisfactory.	Unsatisfactory.
19—Towyn Water Supply—	19	Nil
10—Aberdovey Water Supply...	9	1
20—Private Supplies ...	10	10

Ice Cream—

	Provisional Grade: 1	2	3	4
Number of samples taken—14.	4	2	7	1

Adulteration of Food.—No action taken by the Local Authority.

Nutrition.—Children of school age and infants are in some instances below the standard weight, indicating that the best kind of food is not always available. Parents are often at fault in not encouraging more consumption of milk. Advice is given in this subject at the Child Welfare Clinics.

Bakeries.—These are visited periodically. The premises are in some instances unsatisfactory as regards ventilation and cleanliness.

Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food.—Nil.

Shell Fish.—There are shell fish beds at Aberdovey. During the year 70 cwts. were sent away for consumption. The layings are not liable to pollution. No action was taken under the Public Health (Shell Fish) Regulations, 1934, or the Public Health Act, 1932.

(i) Shell fish taken from layings in the district are sent to Birmingham and Midlands.

(ii) The layings are situated in the Dovey Estuary, in the sand.

Section F. Prevalence of and Control over Infectious and other Diseases.

Notifiable Infectious Diseases.—There was no case of Diphtheria during the year. Action has been taken to provide artificial immunisation against Diphtheria.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the Year 1949.

DISEASES.	Total cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Smallpox	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	0	0	0
Diphtheria	0	0	0
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid ...	0	0	0
Puerperal Fever	0	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	0	0	0
Pneumonia	5	0	5
Other diseases generally notifiable ...	0	0	0
Other diseases, notifiable	0	0	0
Erysipelas	0	0	0
Measles	3	0	0
Poliomyelitis	1	0	1

Disinfection.—A Sack Disinfector is used for dealing with infected bedding, clothing, etc. Infected houses are treated with Formalin. Verminous clothing is also dealt with.

Prevention of Blindness.—There was no case of Ophthalmia Neonatorum notified during the year.

Tuberculosis.—Three deaths during the year. Doubtful or early cases are seen in consultation with the Tuberculosis Medical Officer. The homes of tuberculosis patients are inspected by the Local Sanitary Authority. Formalin is used as disinfectant.

I much appreciate the interest taken by the inhabitants with regard to Diphtheria immunisation, Scabies, and Tuberculosis. No cases of Venereal Disease seen during the year.

(Signed) J. A. DAVIES,
Medical Officer of Health.

Council Offices,
Towyn.

26th June, 1950.

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